



The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast

What I Didn't Learn in Grad School Series

freshslp.com

Episode 91: Real World Preparation with Hallie Sherman: You Are Enough!

Think you've figured out everything about working as an SLP in the real world after you graduate? Think again!

In this episode, Hallie Sherman gives some great practical real world advice ranging from job interview preparation, to effective lesson planning, to seeking guidance as needed. She reminds us that it's okay to not be perfect! That the kids you work with are your focus, and you will be making an impact in their lives. And most importantly, enjoy it and have fun!

Discussion & Reflection Questions

1. Are you a perfectionist? Even a little bit? Have you thought about how you could adapt if things don't go to plan?
2. What is the dynamic of your relationship with your supervisor? Do you feel like you need to impress them? Are they a mentor? Are you comfortable asking them for help when you need it?
3. Have you thought about who you could continue to seek help from or bounce ideas off of as a fresh SLP after grad school?
4. Do you follow other SLP's blogs, podcasts, etc., on topics or areas of expertise that are of interest to you?
5. Have you thought about how you can prep for job interviews as an opportunity to not only bring out the best in you, but also find out whether the organization interviewing you is the right fit?

About Hallie Sherman



Hallie Sherman, M.S. CCC-SLP is a school-based SLP working full time in a public school in NY with older students.

She realized early on in her career that she had to make her sessions fun, engaging, and easy to prep to keep her students motivated and to keep her sanity!

She loves sharing her low prep therapy ideas for older students on her blog, TpT store, podcast, live events, and in her membership SLP Elevate.

When she isn't being an SLP or sharing tips and tricks on social media she can be found hanging out with her two daughters, drinking coffee, or watching Bravo.

Quote from the Conversation

"You can't have every experience in grad school. It's only two years. There's not enough time in the day to test out every single setting. So, when I first started, I had to ask around."

- Hallie Sherman

Mattie Murrey Tegels, MA, CCC-SLP, L, CPC, CLSC

Medical Speech-Language Pathologist and
Founder of Fresh SLP & Badass SLP



Mattie Murrey-Tegels is the founder and SLP behind Fresh SLP, Badass SLP, and The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast. She's been "in-the-trenches" as a medical SLP around the world for over 25 years and now an Assistant Professor for 3 years. She is thrilled to be adding this dream of a podcast

because paying her experiences forward is something she is very passionate about. If you ask her patients and students, one thing they will remember is how much she loves her job!

She may not look like it but she is a huge introvert and when she is not actively working as an SLP, she is almost always reading, writing (writing over 1,000,000 words a year), or listening to amazing Chicago Blues bands. She also loves being outdoors and definitely enjoys soaking up the sun at her home in Minnesota, where warm and sunny days can be limited. She's ridden motorcycles for many years, raced sled dogs, hiked huge mountains yet she cherishes the quiet moments of climbing into a hammock to nap or timeless conversations with friends and family.

The Missing Link for SLPs podcast and Fresh SLP is her legacy, giving back to a career that has so richly rewarded her.

Quote from the Conversation

"I was a GA when I was in grad school. ... I was getting ready to walk into a session one day, and I had my lesson planned, and I had all my materials. I had my game. ... This was already a challenging client for me. (My Supervisor) met me at the door, which is right across from her office, and she took all of my materials, except a pencil, a piece of paper, and a piece of string. And I had to learn to step away from the lesson plan, to step away from the materials, and really, really focus".

- Mattie Murrey-Tegels

Keep the Conversation Going

Thank you for listening to *The Missing Link for SLPs* podcast! **If you enjoyed the show, I'd love you to subscribe, rate it and leave a short review.** Also, please share an episode with a friend. Together we can raise awareness and help more SLPs find and connect those missing links to help them feel confident in their patient care every step of the way.

Follow me on [Instagram](#), join the Fresh SLP community on [Facebook](#) or learn more at [FreshSLP.com](#) or [badassslp.com](#).

Let's make those connections. You got this!

*Do you have a question you'd like answered on the show?
Interested in sharing your experience as an SLP with our audience?*

Send a message to Mattie@FreshSLP.com!

Not a substitute for a formal SLP education or medical advice for patients/caregivers

The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast Show Notes

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The Missing Link for SLPs Podcast Full Transcript

Mattie Murrey 00:00

Welcome to this episode of the missing link for SLPs podcast. I am here with Hallie Sherman, who I am so excited to have you on tonight, Hallie.

Hallie Sherman 00:08

Thank you so much for having me.

Mattie Murrey 00:11

We had already started talking, asking questions, going over what we're going to talk about, and I'm pulling you on pretty quickly because I think we're going to have a lot to talk about. Before we get into the meat of What You Didn't Learn in Graduate School, tell us why, how you became an SLP.

Hallie Sherman 00:30

Sure. So, my story might be different than others, maybe. I went to undergrad as a complete undecided student. I had no idea what I wanted to do with my life. I didn't know if I wanted to go into working with children, education, or business. I was being told by each of my parents to go one route or the other. And I decided let's just go in undecided, and figure it out as I went along.

And I met a friend, freshman year, who told me that she was going for speech pathology. I'm like, "What is that?" She explained it to me. It sounded somewhat interesting. So, the following year, I took the intro to speech pathology class, and fell in love, and never looked back. I dove right in, jumped into all the classes. I was looking for every internship possible so I can be surrounded by SLPs to learn what they do, how they do it. Where could I possibly work? Let me build up that resume so I can get into graduate school. I became, I wouldn't say obsessed, but I was very determined as an undergraduate student, and I just never looked back.

And since then, I moved back home after undergrad, went to graduate school, and went straight to – I first started working in a special at preschool, and then I jumped into different leave replacement positions here on Long Island in New York, until I finally found a tenure track position. And now I'm



working with fifth and sixth grade students, and loving every second of every day. Every day is different, challenging, yet inspiring.

Mattie Murrey 02:04

Excellent. That's one of the things I love about my job, and I'm in a totally different setting than you.

Hallie Sherman 02:10

I love working in a school surrounded by other professionals, and the children, and the best part is I give them back after 30 minutes! So, it's like...

Mattie Murrey 2:21

Yeah.

Hallie Sherman 2:21

... you can't go wrong!

Mattie Murrey 02:22

Sort of like a grandparent.

Hallie Sherman 2:24

Yes.

Mattie Murrey 2:24

I'm a grandparent, and our little one comes over, and she eats candy because grandpa gives it to her, and cookies, and then we play, and we color and we paint, and we send her home!

Hallie Sherman 02:35

I love it. I am the grandparent of this school, where I give them treats, and send them back all hyped up back to class!

Mattie Murrey 02:42

Wonderful, wonderful. It's nice that you have that special place in your heart for those that you work with.

You and I met each other through a podcasting Facebook group for SLPs, and I put out there who would like to be on this new series I'm starting, and it's What I Didn't Learn in Grad School, and you were like, "I would love to be on".



Tell us, now you have – you said you've worked with grad students for a number of years. So, you're really coming in with some good advice.

Hallie Sherman 03:15

Yeah. So, not only did I make mistakes myself, and things I learned in graduate school, but I've also seen so many graduate students throughout the years, excel, struggle, feel overwhelmed, all of the above. And I've been there as a support, a person to guide them, and encourage them that they can do it, and always to remember their why. Why did they go to graduate school? Someone believed in them, and saw that they had the potential, so they do, and I would love to share what I've noticed and learned from them over the years.

Mattie Murrey 03:54

What has been a consistent trend that you have noticed this increasing, with the students coming out?

Hallie Sherman 04:01

A lot of students are very – are lacking confidence in themselves. They're overthinking what they need to do to be successful. They are eager to please. They come from that graduate school mentality of “I have to get an A. It has to be perfect”. And I'm always telling them it doesn't have to be perfect. First of all, B's will get C's, CCC SLP! But also ...

Mattie Sherman 4:23

Oh, I love that!

Hallie Sherman 4:25

B's will get you the C's! But also, that like I'm trying to give them real practical advice. Where I understand that in the clinic, in their clinicals, they expected to write 10-page lesson plans, and have – stick to it, and be so rigid, and to the point where in the schools, and in real life, that you're going to burn out that way.

Mattie Murrey 4:47

Yeah.

Hallie Sherman 4:47

You can't have 100 unique lessons each and every day. You're going to be up late laminating and prepping. And that's not real life when you are out in the real world, and have children, and then a husband – like when you're married, all that fun stuff. Like you can't be doing all that. So, you have to slow down and think, okay, how can I take one book, take one YouTube video, take one game, and target as many goals as possible? And it doesn't have to be perfect, but it can still be effective.



Mattie Murrey 05:18

I love that. Some of the things – if I can add to that beautiful thought, sometimes – I'm a professor and I work in the settings with the students, and they walk in and they've got all of their materials, and their lesson plans are all around the materials, and it needs to be around the person they're working with.

I was a GA when I was in grad school. I was GA for Lynn Larrigan. She's since passed on. When she passed on, there was an Irish funeral march down the streets of Spokane. Loved it. She was very instrumental in my clinical skill development. And I was getting ready to walk into a session one day, and I had my lesson planned, and I had all my materials. I had my game. So, a little kiddo with vocal nodules. And, if you know me, I am not keen on kids, and so this was already – I'm definitely in the adult realm. This was already a challenging client for me. And she met me at the door, which is right across from her office, and she took all of my materials, except a pencil, a piece of paper, and a piece of string. And I had to learn to step away from the lesson plan, to step away from the materials, and really, really focus.

And so, I love what you say, enough is – you are enough. Take what you need, and go enjoy! Have fun,

Hallie Sherman 06:50

Mhm. Focus on the kids in front of you, rather than the materials in front of you. Focus on what they are doing, and not doing, and how you're going to teach it to them. And help them see success, versus them always needing you to be prompting them, versus who cares what the book is, who cares what the activity is.

Mattie Murrey 07:07

Right.

Hallie Sherman 07:07

Your students never know if it didn't go as planned. They'll see it on your face. That's a guide to hide it. You've got to have that poker face on at all times!

Mattie Murrey 07:17

I had a little kid who thought I was Santa Claus, Mrs. Santa Claus, and I think I kept that poker face on.

Hallie Sherman 7:23

Mhm.

Mattie Murrey 7:23

So, that's a trend that you've seen. Students come out, they're lacking confidence, eager to please, and you've given some words of advice for that: stay focused on who you're working with, and enjoy that.



What is a trend that you have seen that they've come up better with?

Hallie Sherman 07:47

They're great with tech. They're really great with technology, graduate students now. Especially more than me, they're teaching me tips and tricks, and like when it comes to Google Slides and finding things on websites. They know how some shortcuts that I just didn't know existed! Pinterest and Teachers Pay Teachers didn't exist when I was in graduate school. I had to use – and there wasn't even Google Images. I had to have a permanent marker and index cards, and make something out of nothing. So, not that they're relying on it, but they are so good with technology, and they can find things faster than I can. So, use those skills that you have, of knowing how to navigate the world wide web, and find some great interactive tools. They also know things about like video games, and anime, and all the things that the kids are into these days that I'm too old for, so!

Mattie Murrey 08:50

Different language.

Hallie Sherman 08:51

Mhm. But, hey, use it to your benefit. If you know about things that they know about, that's a great way to build rapport. [crosstalk]

Mattie Murrey 09:00

Yeah, absolutely. Enter their world.

Hallie Sherman 09:02

Mhm.

Mattie Murrey 9:03

So, I know the listeners can't see you, they can hear you. And I can see you, and you are like seriously ready for podcasting. You've got all of the gear that I wished I had, and may have to ask for my whole family for Christmas! And you have a TpT site. You have SLP Elevate, which is a membership site. You have a three times a year retreat. You have a podcast.

Tell us about the podcast, because that's what I see right here. And then – I have a reason – because I want you to come back after you've explained who you are. I want you to tell us how you got there, because many students don't know they can do these great things.

Hallie Sherman 09:48

Sure. So, about a year and a half ago, I started my SLP Coffee Talk Podcast, because I wanted to have more ways for SLPs to get access to just practical tips and tricks. So, I released a podcast every Monday



morning. That's why it's called Coffee Talk. It's the jolt, or the caffeine you need to start the week or day, that inspiration you need. It's very short, bite-sized episodes that you can digest in a short commute, or while just sipping your cup of morning coffee. And I, like I said, I started my Teachers Pay Teacher's store like eight, nine years ago. And ever since then, things just slowly developed over there. But I love being able to podcast, and be in someone's ear encouraging them that they can do it, and they have – here some extra tips and tricks to help them get there.

Mattie Murrey 10:37

Did you know about all of these things when you were first starting in your career?

Hallie Sherman 10:41

No! One, I am a complete introvert. I really believe so.

Mattie Murrey 10:46

Me too.

Hallie Sherman 10:46

So, if you told me eight, nine years ago that I would be putting myself on the – as my daughter's like to call it, "The radio", I would have laughed at them. If they said that I would have had my face on like an Instagram post, I would have said "Stop that nonsense!"

But when I was early in my career, I was – again, as I mentioned earlier, I was hopping from leave replacement to leave replacement, because there was no permanent jobs here on Long Island for school SLPs in a public school setting, but I was determined to get there. But I was starting to feel, I don't want to say down on my luck, but not feeling as confident in myself because I wasn't where I wanted to be professionally.

And I learned about blogging, and I figured, hey, I could start a blog. I figured it'd be like a diary of my therapy ideas. I did not know about – anything about blogging. I created it myself. I had no idea what I was doing. And people started finding it, and coming back for more, and reaching out saying, "Please share more therapy ideas. This is helping me. There's nothing out there for SLPs working with older speech students". So, I kept coming back, and it gave me the encouragement. If someone else needs this, these ideas and advice, I need to keep going, so I have!

Mattie Murrey 12:05

Yes. It must mean you have some good materials.

Hallie Sherman 12:10

It's what I'm using with my students that I found that works, or doesn't work for that matter.



Mattie Murrey 12:16

One of the things that I enjoy, because I work with students, I carry a clinic on Friday's. It's really fun to watch them. The clinical fellows, not students, learn to. Some of the students are competitive. So, it's nice when they begin their clinical fellowship to show them this is such a collaborative event. It's such a safe setting for you to be in. Go find these resources from other passionate SLPs who write and create in their areas, because that is what's working.

Hallie Sherman 12:52

So true, especially nowadays. There's so many. So much out there. Depending on your style, your philosophies, the setting you work in, you can find something to inspire you, motivate you. We all need those fresh ideas every once in a while. I get sick and tired of doing the same thing each and every day.

Mattie Murrey 13:13

Mhm. So, you've been on the front lines of watching students come out, and they've got this classroom knowledge. They're working on implementing their clinical skills. Any words of advice for improving that classroom to clinic connection?

Hallie Sherman 13:25

Take advantage of the people around you that are doing it with you. Ask questions. Don't be – you don't have to know everything. You know enough, but you don't have to know everything. Our scope of practice is so large. And any new job you start, you need to ask questions. No one expects you to know everything, and the culture of the company, or school you're in. Don't be afraid to ask questions. It doesn't mean you're not competent. It means that you care, and you want to do the best job possible.

Mattie Murrey 13:57

And, when I sit and do medical charts, I'll come across a medical term I don't know, and I'll look it up. We don't have to know everything.

Hallie Sherman 14:08

No. [crosstalk] There's disabilities that come my way, or goals that I haven't worked on in forever. Like I've had maybe one cochlear implant case in my entire career. If I have another one tomorrow, I need to do some PDs, and reading up, and making sure that I know exactly what I'm doing, to best work with that student, so.

Mattie Murrey 14:29

Can you pull out three things – this might be putting you on the spot – three things that you did not know in graduate school that you now know?



Hallie Sherman 14:39

Oh, my God, so much.

One, I didn't know how to work with older speech students, and that's what I'm working with now. I did my one placement in a preschool, and I did the other working with second to fifth grade, and now I'm working with fifth and sixth grade. And at one of my jobs, one of my leave replacements was in a middle school in high school.

I didn't learn that, that you can't have every experience in grad school. It's only two years. They don't – there's not enough time in the day to test out every single setting. So, when I first started, I had to ask around. What did the SLP before me do? Hey, let me talk to the reading teachers. Let me talk to the special educators. What do you notice with these students? How can I support and help you? I had to take some professional development class workshops and read some articles. There's tons of articles on – now with reading comprehension and the SLP connection. I had to do my research to figure out how can I support these students differently, but effectively. And I didn't learn that in graduate school, so I had to learn it all on the job.

Mattie Murrey 15:45

Good example. [crosstalk]

Hallie Sherman 15:47

Well, that's one.

Mattie Murrey 15:49

[crosstalk]

Hallie Sherman 15:49

Number two, there was no technology, or anything like that. So, when the world shut down for COVID, I was forced to start doing therapy over Google Meet. I didn't know anything about that. I had to, again, look for SLPs that had been doing teletherapy for a while. That's not something that existed back then.

And number three, technology has changed so much. When I was in graduate school, there were no iPads, and SLP AAC on iPads, and apps for that. We learned about token boards and some Dynavox stuff, like some basic tech. Like I mean, that's what was around then, and the popular kind of tools and devices. So, when I heard that maybe I might have a student with an iPad, I went to a workshop to learn about Proloquo2Go. I'm like, let me just learn what I need to do to be effective.



Mattie Murrey 16:44

So, you went and got the resources, got the knowledge, learned, and asked questions. Did you seek out mentors?

Hallie Sherman 16:52

Not as many as I should have early on. I didn't take advantage of my CS supervisor as much. I felt like I needed to prove that I knew what I was doing, versus asking a lot of questions. I definitely made that mistake. But I do remember when I first got hired for my first position, and I knew I was getting – going to be working with a student with a Dynavox, I did go to my professor that taught the AAC class and said, “Help me out. Like I need help. I don't know what I'm doing”, so. And they were eager and happy to meet with me during office hours. No one else was there. So, I got that one-on-one support that I needed.

Mattie Murrey 17:33

Mhm. You know, you hit on something crucial that we haven't talked about on this series yet, and that is so many clinical fellows, when they start, they feel they really need to impress their supervisor. So, they're not as transparent and as authentic as they need to be. And therefore, as supervisors or clinical fellow supervisors, we think everything's okay, and they're understanding everything, and things are going all right. The work that I do at Fresh SLP, I find out, no, that things sometimes are not okay.

What words of advice would you give to the clinical fellow who does feel she or he needs to impress their clinical fellowship supervisor?

Hallie Sherman 18:23

Firstly, about the question that you're having or the struggle that you're having, is it normal? Is it something that you can look up and try on your own? Can you troubleshoot? Because, yes, you don't want to go to them for everything. Yes. But you go from graduate school where you turn – look over your shoulder and they're standing right there, to they might not even be in the building that you're in, and you might have to just be touching base via email once a month. That might be the only communication you have. So, yes, first think about is this really an emergency? Can it be something that you can research on your own? Can you troubleshoot it? And then, if you still are unsure, ask. What's the worst that happens? They say, “Go figure it out”. They might not be happy. They might be happy to answer, and it might be something that is really worth asking, and getting that support from.

Mattie Murrey 19:14

I've had students, clinical fellows, ask me and I don't know the answer, because I don't know everything. And then I say go figure it out, and double back!

Hallie Sherman 19:23

Mhm. And let me know because I want to know that too!



Mattie Murrey 19:27

Yeah. It's that collaboration, again.

What are some words of advice that somebody gave you that you did not follow that you were glad you did not follow?

Hallie Sherman 19:38

Ooh, that I'm glad I didn't follow? Hmm. Oh, my goodness, this is a hard one. Um ...

Mattie Murrey 19:46

It's a good question.

Hallie Sherman 19:47

I had people say, work in private practice where you can have more of a flexible schedule when you have kids, and this and that. I'm glad I stuck it out and worked in the schools. I do love the population that you get to work with, the collaboration with other professionals, not just SLPs. I like being that one person in that student's school day where they know that they can be – feel successful and confident, and have fun!

Where they're upset – like I had a student today tell me like, “Where have ...”, like I was absent last week on his day of speech. He's like, “Where have you been?” And I'm like, “I'm so sorry! Am I not allowed to be absent? I'm sorry! Everything's okay, though”.

So, I'm glad I didn't take that advice. Every once in a while when I have to miss certain things with my children, and in their schools, I'm a little upset that I didn't have some flexible schedules. But, hey, I have summers off. I have school holidays off. I have all the – I'm able to be home. I'm able to take my kids off the bus when they get home from school. So, I'm happy I stuck it out.

Mattie Murrey 20:54

I'm so happy that you're so happy in your school setting.

Hallie Sherman 20:59

I really am. Also, when I first got this position working with fifth and sixth graders, I was like, really? When I went on the interview, I had no idea what age group they were hiring for. And they were like, “Yes, in a fifth and sixth grade building”. I'm like, “Really? This is where I might be stuck for the rest of my life!” And I'm glad I took the job, because I can't imagine working with the younger ones anymore. It's not for me.



Mattie Murrey 21:23

So, in the true spirit of What You Didn't Learn in Graduate School, what words of advice do you have about interviewing?

Hallie Sherman 21:33

Oh, I have a few. One thing is be – listen to the questions they're asking. You might start seeing a trend. If you're going to several different Districts or positions, you might start to see some trends that you can start preparing for.

Also, if you know anyone that works in those Districts, especially now with social media, you can always post in any group and say, "Hey, can you mind if I DM you" or whatever. But knowing about the culture of those buildings, and what kind of person they might be looking for.

But also, you're also interviewing them. So, you don't want to be too critical, but you want to come in with some questions where you can feel like you can decide if it's a place for you or not. You don't want to just settle for any job that offers you a position.

Mattie Murrey 22:18

Sounds like good advice.

Final question. What words of advice do you have for the newer SLP? The fresh SLP getting started?

Hallie Sherman 22:32

Always remember your why. Why did you go into this field? It's not easy. Getting into graduate school was tough. Passing the practice was tough. Finishing graduate school is tough. Getting a job is tough. But you did it all because you fell in love with the field. And remember your why. For those tough days when you want to cry, crawl into a ball, or call in sick because you just don't want to do it, remember your why.

And remember the impact you're making on these clients, these students, whoever you're working with. That someone's relying on you to make such an amazing impact. We get the pleasure of providing children, or whoever you're working with each and every day, with communication and the ability to be a successful student, successful communicator, and person in society. And we can. We really are. Parents are looking at us to make an impact. Teachers are looking to us for help. And we get to do that each and every day, and get a paycheck as a bonus!

Mattie Murrey 23:39

Mhm. That's an excellent note to end on. Thank you for coming.

Hallie Sherman 23:43

My pleasure. Thank you so much for having me.

